

# **FY21 LAND and PARC Grant Programs Workshop**

---

**DIVISION OF  
CONSERVATION  
SERVICES**

# DCS Grant Programs

- **Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity (LAND)** – acquire conservation land
- **Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities (PARC)** – acquire recreation land and/or develop public outdoor recreation facilities



Erving Riverfront Park



Holland Glen Forest, Belchertown

# DCS Grant Programs

- **Grant announcement is in anticipation of funding**
- Priorities for the FY21 Grant Round:
  - ▶ **Conservation Projects (LAND)**
    - Biodiversity protection
    - Landscape conservation
    - Outdoor passive recreation
    - Stewardship of conservation lands
  - ▶ **Recreation Projects (PARC)**
    - Access to recreation for all residents, especially those that go above and beyond to provide access to people with disabilities
    - Environmental Justice neighborhoods
    - Development of new parks
    - Designs that incorporate climate resilience

# LAND and PARC Grant Information

- **Grant deadline July 15, 2020 at 3:00 pm**
- Applicants must have an Open Space and Recreation Plan on file with DCS by grant deadline
- Applicants with outstanding conversion issues are ineligible
- Maximum grant award of \$400,000
- Reimbursement rate between 52% and 70%



Hazelwood Park, New Bedford

# LAND and PARC Grant Information

- Download an application package at <https://www.mass.gov/grant-programs-offered-by-the-division-of-conservation-services>
- Fillable pdf applications
- Do not purchase land without signed contract!
- Do not begin construction without signed contract!
- MHC and NHESP review



Hoyt-Sullivan Park, Somerville  
Photo courtesy KMD

# Eligible Project Costs

- **For LAND & PARC acquisition projects:**
  - ▶ Property purchase
  - ▶ Title research & certification
  - ▶ Recording fees
  - ▶ Survey
- **For PARC renovation/development projects:**
  - ▶ Engineering
  - ▶ Design
  - ▶ Construction
  - ▶ Construction supervision (during year 2)
- This is not an inclusive list – ask if you have specific questions

# Ineligible Project Costs

- Appraisals
- Donations
- In-kind expenses
- Legal fees
- Staff time
- Equipment or goods
- Application preparation costs
- 21E assessment and compliance fees
- Brownfields restoration
- And everything else not listed as eligible!
- **When in doubt, ask!**



Adams Station

# Selection Process for DCS Grants

- All projects are visited by DCS staff, then rated and ranked (rating system is included in each grant's application package)
- Recommendations are approved by EEA's Secretary and the Governor's office
- ***Estimated*** grant award announcement date is December 2020
- Do not plan on closing on any properties during calendar year 2020
- Project completion dates:
  - FY21 acquisition projects: June 1, 2021
  - FY22 acquisition and construction projects: June 1, 2022

# Rating Systems

- Two rating systems – one for LAND, one for PARC
- Each contains demographic information
  - ▶ Federal census data
  - ▶ Environmental Justice
  - ▶ Calculated by EEA
- Rating systems included in each grant BID package



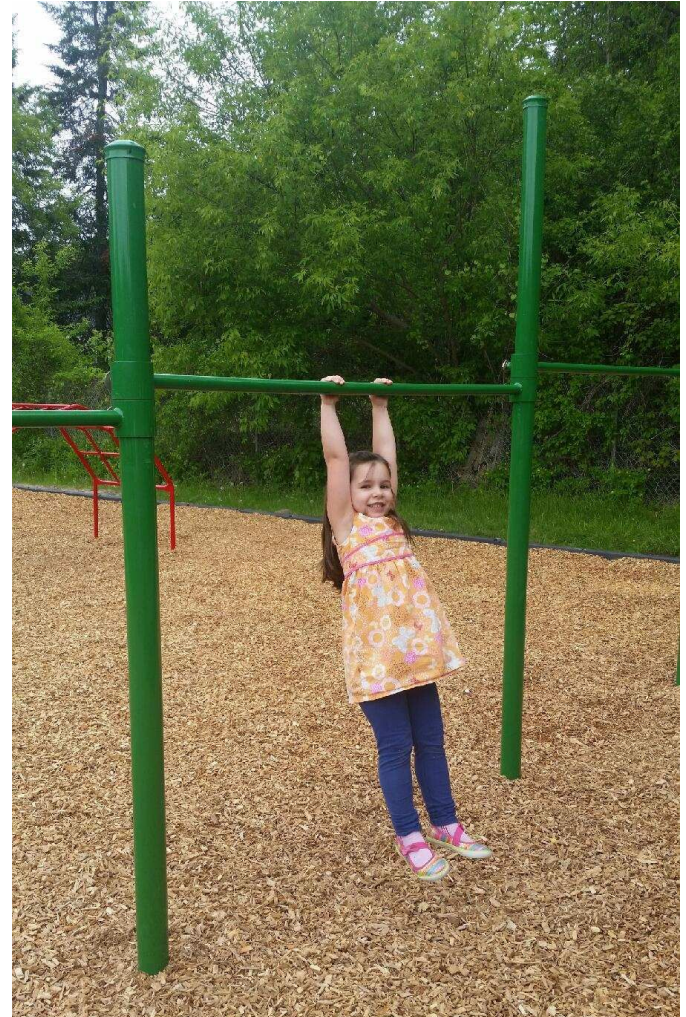
Pulaski Park, Northampton

# Municipal Votes

- All projects must have a town meeting/city council vote
- The vote must do three things:
  - ▶ Authorize submission of grant application
  - ▶ Approve appropriation of 100% of the total project cost
  - ▶ Dedicate the land to recreation or conservation purposes (specific to each grant program)
- Use sample vote language in application package
- **Send all LAND grant draft vote language to Nathaniel for approval**
- **Send all PARC grant draft vote language to Melissa for approval**

# Municipal Votes

- Vote can occur after application deadline or after grant decisions have been announced, but...
- Successful grants must have vote in by end of the calendar year – plan accordingly (we may be more flexible with this requirement this year)
- May use some types of federal monies, such as CDBG, as local portion of total grant costs
- CPA funds can be used as local share



Lee Athletic Field, Lee

# CPA Communities, LWCF Recipients

- Any properties acquired with Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds must include the conveyance of a Conservation Restriction to an eligible 3<sup>rd</sup> party
- LAND and PARC grant recipients must show compliance with this requirement prior to final reimbursement
- This is required for all CPA communities regardless of if CPA funds are being used for the project subject to this application
- Grant recipients that have Land and Water Conservation Fund sites in their community will have to complete an inspection form on all properties prior to final reimbursement

# Post-completion Responsibilities

- All sites that receive LAND or PARC funding are protected by Article 97, which means the land must remain as conservation or recreation land in perpetuity
- Site must be open to all – this includes both non-residents and people with disabilities
- Fair fee policy
- Sign requirements



# Useful Tips

- No binders, folders, plastic sleeves, etc. – use binder clips to fasten applications together
- PARC: 1 original and 1 paper copy – clearly mark the copy
- LAND: 1 original, 1 paper copy, 1 electronic copy
- Double-sided copy if possible, please
- Clearly mark all attachments – use the application form as an attachment checklist
- Maintain the format of the application form by using the fillable pdf

# Useful Tips

- Answer ALL questions
- If providing copies of municipal charter, only include relevant section and highlight appropriately
- Focus on the big picture – if one thing is filled in incorrectly, the application will still be eligible (most likely)



LoPresti Park, Boston

# PARC Projects

- Purchase parkland
- Develop new public outdoor recreation facilities
- Renovate existing municipal public parks
- Land must be dedicated to public park purposes and under custody of Park or Recreation Commission or Park Department (Chapter 45, Section 3 or 14)



Camp Paradise, Beverly

# PARC Grants

- All cities regardless of size or towns with more than 35,000 residents are eligible for maximum \$400,000 grant award
- Towns with less than 35,000 residents proposing project with access to public transportation or 100 car parking lot are also eligible for maximum \$400,000 grant award
- All other town projects are eligible for maximum \$100,000 grant award (this is referred to as a “small town” grant)
- Small town grant applications will be competing for separate pool of funding
- Letters of support deadline – postmarked by July 22, 2020 (not required)
- Two year grant (for renovation/development projects) – first year for design, second year for construction

# PARC Application Tips

- Complete answers to all questions
- Appraisal(s) must be submitted for acquisition projects
- Preliminary design (done prior to application deadline) must be firm enough to generate a solid cost estimate
- Make sure to break budget details into design and construction costs (two distinct FYs)
- Remember to include construction administration costs in year 2



Cushing Memorial Park, Framingham

# PARC Application Tips

- Answer the following questions in the project description:
  - ▶ Is this park in an EJ neighborhood?
  - ▶ Does the park design go above and beyond in providing access to people with disabilities? How so?
  - ▶ Is this a new park?
  - ▶ Will there be environmental education on site?
  - ▶ Is water-based recreation offered at the park?
  - ▶ Does the park design incorporate resiliency?
  - ▶ Did my community complete enhanced outreach in EJ neighborhoods?
  - ▶ Do I have a partner for future stewardship?
  - ▶ What is my park system's staffing level and funding like?
  - ▶ How does this project address my OSRP's goals, objectives or action plan items?

# PARC Model Project

- Project will build a new park in an Environmental Justice neighborhood that goes above and beyond in its consideration of accessibility for people with disabilities with its design incorporating climate resiliency that was developed through multiple public input sessions
- Park includes waterfront access with signage on the importance of water quality and will host summer camps
- Municipality proposing the project has not received a PARC grant in the past five grant rounds and demonstrated its ability to maintain park through its partnership with a local Friends of Said Park group

# LAND Projects

- Land acquisition
  - ▶ Fee simple
  - ▶ Conservation Restriction
- Conservation Commission control
- For conservation and passive recreation
- Cooperative projects – many communities work closely with land trusts



Punkhorn Parklands, Brewster

# LAND Grants

- Appraisals
  - ▶ Requirements are on page 4 of the BID document
  - ▶ Two appraisals recommended if the first has value over \$750,000
- Budget
  - ▶ Itemize anticipated expenses
- Project narrative
- Maps
  - ▶ Natural resources and landscape context

# Most Competitive Projects

- Ecological resources
  - ▶ Habitat & biodiversity
  - ▶ Water
- Landscape level protection
  - ▶ Links to existing protected open space or serves as catalyst
  - ▶ Large
  - ▶ Climate change resiliency
- Public passive recreation
- Open Space and Recreation Plan goals
- Working lands
- Stewardship capacity



# Joint Applications

- New this year
- Two or more municipalities applying for a single grant
- Properties in each municipality must be adjacent
- A letter signed by all municipalities designating a lead
- Reimbursements up to \$400,000 per municipality
  - ▶ Up to \$800,000 for two municipalities
  - ▶ \$1.2M for three municipalities
- Reimbursement rate will be the average of all the municipalities' rates

# LAND Model Project

- A conservation project that provides passive outdoor recreational activities in a Census tract with a high population density without substantial open space
- Proposed project will protect highly valued habitat and farmland resources, while providing connectivity to other protected open space and will serve as a catalyst for future conservation efforts on the abutting property
- Municipality has not received a LAND grant in the past five grant rounds and demonstrated its ability to provide stewardship for its existing conservation lands

# Other DCS Grant Programs

- Conservation Partnership grant

For: non-profits

Max award: \$85,000

To: acquire land/CRs

App deadline: July 20, 2020

- Land and Water Conservation Fund grant

For: municipalities, tribes, DCR, DFG

Max award: \$1,000,000

To: build/renovate trails, acquire land for trails

App deadline: April 8, 2020

- Drinking Water Supply Protection grant

For: municipal water departments/non-profit public water suppliers/water districts

Max award: \$300,000 (in FY20)

To: acquire land/CRs

App deadline: TBD

- Landscape Partnership grant

For: municipal conservation commissions, water departments, non-profits, and state and federal agencies

Max award: \$1,250,000 (in FY20)

To: acquire 500+ acres of land/CRs/APRs

App deadline: TBD

# Contact Information

Nathaniel Thomas  
(617) 626-1187  
nathaniel.thomas1@mass.gov

Melissa Cryan  
(617) 626-1171  
melissa.cryan@mass.gov

Visit DCS online at <https://www.mass.gov/grant-programs-offered-by-the-division-of-conservation-services>

**Open question period ends on June 24, 2020**  
**Have your questions answered before then**